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ABSTRACT

The positive and negative factors that exist in the area of teacher evaluation are surveyed. The traditional aversions to evaluation which have created a negativistic environment of ambiguity and frustration in terms of educational improvement are discussed. The factors, processes, tenets, and characteristics of effective evaluation that have been developed in past and present educational research are enumerated. The paper presents specific criteria which would provide a systematic process that incorporates the positive aspects of evaluation by use of performance criteria and behavioral objectives. These criteria are seen as initiating a new trend in teacher role perception that offers more effective performance and measurement. Emphasis is placed on the differential roles and styles of teaching that characterize the profession today and greatly extend the parameters of the teaching experience. Guidelines are presented for a model for future evaluation which emphasizes teacher-student and teacher-administrator interaction and provides for increased utilization of individual skills, knowledges, and attitudes that results in a maximization of performance outcomes. By applying these principles through more precise systems of evaluation a more meaningful process of educational accountability can be achieved. (AE)

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A LOOK AT TEACHER EVALUATION

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The assignment of the topic teacher evaluation is a clever projective technique. What is it all about? What aspects come to your mind? Selection - assignment - in-service evaluation? I'm sorry I don't have an accurate indication of your interests and concerns. Lacking these I will prepare you for what I'll address my comments.

I'm not going to take an Alice-In-Wonderland walk through the forest of educational evaluation - making comments of the flora - and fauna along the way.

I'm not going to offer a kit of patent medicines in the form of scales, instruments, and data processing systems because medicines and treatments successful for a malady in one location often are found to be successfully administered to others in other locations but they don't cure the malady and at times even when the proper dosage is administered the patient dies.

What I will try to do is select out some building materials, nuts, bolts, and glue from which you may hopefully find some pieces and parts that may be put together like an erector set to fit your particular situation and application.

Now let's sift thru the accumulated stock pile and look at what has been happening in teacher evaluation.

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A Look at Teacher Evaluation

Teacher Evaluation! This topic would certainly rank high on a list of topics that elicit opposed opinions of desirability, utility, positive or negative results or ambivalence. Our experiences with the process of teacher evaluation suggest several explanations for these conditions.

First and foremost we might observe <u>there is no enthusiastic constituency for evaluation</u>. For example I have never experienced a group of teachers who were clamoring and pleading to be evaluated. Furthermore, I have perceived reticence if not distaste for the job of evaluating others by those assigned this responsibility.

Secondly, there has, and continues to be the feeling that to judge or evaluate another person is essentially a negative, a presumptuous or perhaps an inhuman or improper act. This is of course prompted by the anticipation that evaluation must focus on short-comings, inadequacies or negative aspects of behavior. This is well exemplified in the usual conference after a teacher has been observed--when the observer compliments the teacher on certain techniques, plans or student response, the teacher will relate, "Okay, okay, thanks a lot--but now what did you see that was wrong?"

Thirdly, evaluation is commonly considered to be <u>something</u> that <u>someone</u> (an outsider, a person not involved or responsible) does to another person. It is an external action that the person has to cope with. Related to this are the common threats to the person being evaluated, which include: What criteria will be used? What element, context, method or sample of behavior will be singled out? Will any consideration be given to the characteristics of the students, how they were when they arrived, what preceded this moment in time, etc., etc.; and

Fourth, although agencies have proclaimed that the essential purpose of evaluation is to assist all persons to do a better job and to continuously improve the educational program, the operation of the evaluation procedures has led many, if not most teachers to conclude that the primary purpose is to eliminate those who do not play the game or act in the image of the administrator, supervisor or manager. No one gets continuing help.

Finally, for this list could go on at length, there seems to be the tacit assumption that traditional forms or structures or operations of evaluation are <u>inevitable</u> <u>and</u> <u>exclusive</u> responsibilities of persons with certain titles. In the school setting it is just assumed that the supt., asst. supt., principal and teacher will play traditional roles. Justification for this continuance is made by merely stating that someone must be the ultimate authority and must make a decision regarding personnel. And--since decisions must be made--then the responsible person must continue to rely on experience-based intuitive perceptions and informal assessments that constitute the best judgments (by him) at that time.

I suggested at the outset, that educators' experiences had created these impressions or conclusions regarding the process of teacher evaluation. Although these reactions are obviously related to the evaluation of teachers-in-service, I would contend that each of these reactions have corollaries to the difficult decisions that relate to (1) what are the bases for evaluating whether a person should be given a credential? (2) what data and evidences should be used for predicting probable success in teaching? who should be hired? (3) who should be granted or assigned special status such as tenure, supervision, management or development responsibilities?

Another source of the profession's ambivalence and frustration with teacher evaluation is found in the accumulated research which has attempted to find answers to such questions as (1) what are the essential knowledges, skills, experiences and attitudes to be provided by teacher-training institutions? (2) what are the characteristics of an effective teacher?--(cognitive, affective, personality, socially) (3) what are effective teacher-learner relationships? (4) what are effective instructional techniques? (5) what are the singular or multiple roles that effective teachers must play? (6) what are the criteria of effective teaching?

Some might be prompted to observe that few pay any attention to or know very much about the research findings, so this wouldn't make a difference. On the contrary, the research has seemed to reenforce the problems and dilemmas of teacher evaluation. Furthermore, first-hand experience with research and development efforts (on the local scene) has tended to give many persons empirical validation for the general statements of non-conclusive evidence they hear debated in colleges, school districts and professional meetings.

The Handbook of Research on Teaching (AERA 1963) is a monumental summary of the prodigious amount of research concerning these teacher evaluation questions since the turn of the century. More recently the ERIC Resumé on Measurement and Evaluation of Teaching (H.E.W. 1968) presented an update on the research findings. Other sources are the annual reviews of research and the journals of education and teacher education. The many sources lead to almost identical conclusions concerning the findings from the enormous number of researches that span a period of seventy years. A brief review of the common conclusions seems to document the problems that

have been plaguing and continue to plague evaluation practices. In addition, the questions and unanswered problems suggest strategies and hypotheses for new constructs, new definitions and new operations.

The prime conclusion from research - "a half century of prodigious research effort--from which very little is known about the nature of teacher personality and little or nothing is known about the relation between teacher characteristics and teaching effectiveness." Ryans' seven-year study on the Characteristics of Teachers compiled some of the most extensive data on a large teacher population. In an attempt to determine what teacher characteristics were related to teacher effectiveness, an elaborate factorial analysis was made. The result--as in many other researches--an endless list of traits were correlated with supervisors' ratings. The traits of the effective teachers were: fair, democratic, responsive, understanding, kindly, stimulating, original, alert, attractive, responsible, steady, poised, honest, confident, etc. The non-effective were the converse traits.

However, when a relationship between learner behavior and teacher behavior was examined, a near zero or chance relationship was found. The research seems to say--we can measure the learner and the teacher, but we cannot say which teaching behaviors cause which changes in student behaviors or what teaching leads to what learning.

Some of the factors which contribute to the ambiguity of the information on teaching are:

1. Different or undefined concepts of criteria for effective teaching.
2. Inadequate definition of the factors that relate to effective teaching.
3. Lack of definition and control of other factors which affect the outcomes of teaching.

4. The criteria of product, process and influences are used interchangeably without definition, weighting or relationship.
5. The single variable research design and desire for total applicability has not promoted criteria of effectiveness according to (1) the culture, (2) the level or age of the learner, (3) the characteristics (input) of the learner, (4) the curricula, (5) the context and situation in which the teaching occurs.
6. Investigations with the teaching process have largely paid inadequate attention to conditions, climates, attitudes, etc; and because they have relied on direct observations, there has been an insufficient amount of observation time, sampling of various contents, recorded data as valid and reliable samples of the total teaching experience. Furthermore there is the constant uncertainty of the validity and reliability of the observations.
7. Although it has been shown that it is possible to train raters to agree--have high reliability--there is question whether the rater and ratee are both using the same criteria from a perceptual-cognitive frame of reference.

In this rather bleak or dismal picture of the findings of research and the common reactions to teacher evaluation, there are of course some bright islands which report a very happy and comfortable adjustment to teacher evaluation. In general these seem to be the smaller institutions that have continuous, comprehensive and in-depth communications among the staff of varying responsibility and the communities they serve. Experience with these systems suggests that they have studied (1) the five processes of evaluation, (2) the tenets of evaluations and (3) the characteristics of effective evaluation. The contents of these are the following:

The approach to evaluation is a systematic one which recognizes that the following five processes must be effectively implemented:

1. The development of goal statements (what the program plans to accomplish).
2. The translation of goals into objectives which are defined in observable and measurable behaviors that are accepted as evidences of the attainment of the objective.
3. The identification and description of the experiences or means for achieving the objectives.
4. The selection or development of procedures for gathering data to appraise the attainment of the objective (sampling, assessments and data collection).
5. The procedures for summarization and interpretation of data are explicitly defined.

In the course of working through the processes of evaluation the following tenets of evaluation are recognized as factors in the products produced.

1. Meanings, understandings, attitudes, and actions are the products of personal perceptions.
2. The daily life of each person is a reflection of his continuous subjective evaluations.
3. Objectivity represents consensus among those perceiving the same situation. Reality is the pooled agreement about the nature of the situation
4. Scientific evaluation endeavors to make explicit descriptions of the implicit, implied or unstated objectives and criteria of a program.

5. The criteria or behaviors selected as evidences of the attainment of the defined objectives incorporate or reflect the values which are used to judge the worth of the program.
6. The 'sampling process' is accepted as a valid means of assessing the characteristics of the object of the evaluation.
7. Any attempt to evaluate represents a small sample of the total behavior or situation.
8. Summaries of descriptive or quantitative assessment data do not evaluate. Evaluation is concerned with the judgment made of the assessment data.
9. The concepts of objectivity, reliability, validity, probable error, etc., apply to all forms of assessments and data gathering procedures, whether they are standardized tests or teacher observation.
10. A variety of assessment techniques is required to obtain comprehensive information concerning the attainment of an educational program.

Our experience in working with the institutions that have developed effective evaluation procedures leads up to conclude that there are a few characteristics that commonly apply. Among these characteristics the following appear to be of prime importance.

1. Persons involved in the evaluation participate in the development of the objectives and processes of the evaluation.
2. The process of evaluation is built in as a basic and continuous part of the educational program. The evaluation process provides definition, systems for checking on the procedures, and a planned means of gathering and summarizing the data concerning the progress of the program.

3. The ultimate goal of educational evaluation is recognized as a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the educational program. All objectives of the educational program or the procedures cannot be evaluated by gathering data regarding a few objectives--e.g., the evaluation of reading does not evaluate social responsibility.
4. The evaluation program clearly describes the assessments used for gathering data concerning each of the objectives.
5. The behaviors or conditions selected as measurable reflections (criteria) of the attainment of the defined objectives are continuously appraised as to whether they represent the attainment which was originally posited.
6. The assessment data for evaluation are gathered and summarized in a manner which is understood and therefore interpretable by those involved in the process.

The utilization of such a systematic process of evaluation with conscientious concern for such tenets and characteristics of effective evaluation appear to be important contributors in those institutions which have experienced desirable and positive results. Of course the element of greatest importance seems to be the provision that all persons involved in the evaluation (evaluator and evaluatee) are continuously engaged in the development, revision and implementation of the processes.

The current ferment and turmoil surrounding education appear to have many rather direct relationships to the topic of teacher evaluation and effective teaching. Just a few labels, constructs and proposals will illustrate the new "climate" and "pressures" for more exact indices of quality-cost-effective education.

Accountability

Auditing

Planning, Performance, Budgeting, Evaluation, System

Performance Contracting

Voucher Plan

Independent legislative commissions for licensing (rather than credentials) and an opposite force perhaps growing out of Negotiations.

Some of the flavor of this climate is also expressed in the reports from recent national symposia on teacher assessment and evaluation. One of such symposia sponsored by the New York Agencies and several training institutions suggested that already an invisible revolution is occurring which will designate performance standards for what a teacher will do and will accomplish.

This symposium suggests that the process--product confusion has been the major obstacle in past efforts to evaluate teaching and educational programs. The central issue is to determine whether the desired result (student learning) is achieved. Secondly, if several methods or processes are used to produce the same result, then the relative expense, effectiveness and by-products may be compared.

The symposium suggested that the objectives of this invisible revolution were:

1. The object of teaching is to bring about learning.
2. Teacher effectiveness is determined by the extent to which student learning objectives are achieved in the classroom.
3. The wider the range of effective teacher behaviors, the larger their potential for competency.
4. There is no single performance model for a "good" teacher--many models must be developed and used.

A similar trend or flavor is noted in the summary of trends in teacher education models developed at Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Pittsburgh, Syracuse and Georgia. Although the several institutions emphasize various strategies, the models seem to emphasize:

1. An increasing pressure of society on education.
2. A shift from process to content of a product--deemphasis on educational pedagogy, replaced by subject-matter competency matched or communicated through inquiry and problem solving.
3. Behavioral and measurable outcomes as the products of learning.
4. Levels of development of teachers--interns, assoc., master--portal schools
5. Differentiated roles of teachers--aides, tutors, managers, curr. developers, technicians, counselors.
6. Diagnosis of the learner--prescriptions for an individualized approach to learners.
7. Development of affective and cognitive characteristics of the teacher in the teacher-learner relationships.

There are obvious similarities in the reports of these two consortia on teacher assessment and evaluation and teacher training or teacher education and development.

I would like to single out one concept which seems to represent one of--if not the main--blind alleys or booby-traps that has been responsible for the lack of progress in educational research to discover characteristics of teacher effectiveness. That is the assumption that it is possible to order teaching behavior (for all teachers) on a single dimension of effectiveness. A teacher is not always a teacher (- a teacher - a teacher - -) in the same dimension or in the same configuration as another person is a teacher (is a teacher, is a teacher) in any situation.

This strongly suggests that a person, previously referred to in a generic manner as a teacher, represents a unique configuration of such qualities as (1) amount of knowledge of certain curriculum contents, (2) interest, attitudes, skills in (a) individual work with a learner, (b) group presentations, (c) organization of groups, (d) the use of multi-media materials, (e) the development of learning strategies, (f) management and record keeping of an activity or system, (g) development of learning materials and sequences, (h) communications and interpretations of educational process and product with adults. I would contend that although there has been indirect reference made to these individual differences, the evaluation of teachers and the products of their actions have never been assessed in such a manner. The same rating categories apply to all--and of course on the surface, such a plan has obvious objectivity and fairness! On the other hand, it may be a less than accurate picture of what a person can contribute--and it has apparently maintained the basis of selection, training assignment and evaluation as an expectancy that all teachers should fit any teaching assignment in the district.

A facet of this observation that there is indeed uniqueness among teachers (as well as among all of us) is our accumulated experience in evaluating 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th or 10th year teachers. I'm sure you have had the same experience as I in conferences with principals concerning the adequacy of a 1st or 2nd year teacher--the conversation goes something like this: "He doesn't have the skills an experienced teacher has to control the classroom; he's improving in his ability to plan a good lesson, he's really well liked when he works with individual students; we've agreed he needs help in how you talk to parents, and he seems interested in getting help from the other teachers on how you can use or develop materials to make learning interesting and effective."

Does this statement just describe a <u>developmental status</u> that all teachers pass through--and go on to master each element in one--two--or five years? My hunch is that individuals have a style, a preference for activities and a very jagged profile (lots of peaks and valleys) of knowledges and skills. This results in the development of different interests, knowledges and skills that frequently persevere through 5--10--15 or perhaps 30 years of teaching.

One implication of this observation is that differentiated staffing, differential assignments and expected outcomes make very practical sense in the current climate of accountability, performance contracting and cost effectiveness. If you are intrigued by the concept of management by objectives and assessments of outcomes for evaluation, you can perhaps agree that specific assignments based upon existing skills and knowledges could be evaluated upon the assessments of the explicit products anticipated as outcomes of that work.

It appears that some teacher-training institutions are organizing programs to develop the several knowledges and skills of such a profile. At the time of employment, selection might be in terms of specific types of staff assignments rather than a general assignment with unknown emphases, demands or criteria for effective operation.

A reenforcement of this construct came to me recently in my association with a Professional Development Act project to retrain teachers who had been in long service in inner-city schools. This project is taking teachers out of the classroom and providing an intensive training in diagnosing students' present status, prescribing next steps of learning, developing precise objectives of instruction, preparing valid procedures for determining whether the learning objective had been achieved and organizing a manageable individualized instruction. The program includes presentations concerning learning theory, motivation, retention, reenforcement, developing explicit taxonomical objectives for learning and the techniques of lesson analysis. The training sessions provide observation of demonstration lessons by master teachers, a critical application of lesson analysis to the demonstration observed, tandem planning of lessons, tandem teaching, group and individual analysis of the lesson in achieving the objective, refining the lesson, reteaching, etc. After the cycle of this training, the teachers return to their classrooms and follow-through assistance is provided as well as occasional returns to the training center.

Now to the observations that seem relevant to this construct of differential assignments, expectancies and criteria for effectiveness. The teacher participants (in almost every case) volunteer that they have never considered or taught from such a design--while at the same time loudly agreeing that these principles, techniques and outcomes have always been subscribed to and expected. As they work in teams for planning, teaching, analyzing, revising, reteaching, etc., roles and skills of the two teachers quickly emerge.---- In spite of new learnings on their part and the development and demonstration of the skills there is a marked tendency for a style, a functional relationship and an interest, an enthusiasm for a particular type of work or product to

emerge and be maintained. I must also observe that in the limited follow-up with last year's trainees, there are some that cannot internalize this diagnostic-prescriptive-individualized-specific objective achieved product goal as a viable teacher-learner relationship and expectancy.

This was exemplified by the teacher who commented, "I just can't accept this very mechanical approach to learning. I just love to work with children and try to stimulate them to discover new things for themselves. I don't want to say here is what you are expected to learn. I'd rather just have an interesting time and then be surprised by what they learn."

However, of most import to this topic is the fact that different knowledges and skills and products do emerge, they are sustained through time, they are observable and measurable. Moreover, they are in large part the self-selected and self-motivated developments of individuals who are apparently willing to recognize them and be evaluated in terms of them. In this project context--and I believe the same can occur in any school setting--the project director or manager (it could be a principal in another setting), the master teachers and the teacher participants are all involved in a continuous evaluation process with dogged adherence to looking at the explicit objective of any lecture, lesson or skill-training exercise and the aforementioned elements of the analysis of learning. The insights and reliable evidences reduce the dependence upon a high level of inference. The analysis is participated in by the participants and there is acceptance of the decisions for the degree of attainment and the needed next steps in revising and reteaching.

Earlier I referred to some tenets and characteristics of effective evaluation. This E. P. D. A. process seems to incorporate many of these tenets. It also suggests that a viable plan for selection of teachers, assignment of teachers and teacher evaluation can be based upon the explicit roles and expected products of differentiated assignments.

In the aggressive efforts of some to put into full practice a performance contract, there are always staff members and administrators who raise the questions: "Then all you care about is the amount of the product (student learning) that is achieved--but really now the process and what you do to students is a very real concern of all of us and the parents, too." Others will observe "that kind of emphasis on the product makes no mention of what are the entry characteristics of the learners, the facilities we have to work in, or the materials and processes we can use." "Or does this mean that all the other goals and objectives in education are to be ignored and we will only be evaluated on the percent of production of that learning."

I'm sure you can supply the answers to such questions which would develop explicit descriptions of the ranges of teacher or learner behavior that would be acceptable to the Staff, Board of Education or community. These descriptions probably represent tolerance limits of acceptable performance that would apply to all differentiated staff assignments. Such are the limits of desirable behavior in attendance, manners and morals, physical punishment, etc. Such limits should not be left to high inference ratings but be supported by explicit descriptions of the undesirable and desirable behavior limits. Even in this form the research shows that we can accomplish reliable and accurate ratings.

The promising practices in evaluating Teaching incorporate the following approaches:

1. Selecting Explicit Criteria for Context, Input, Process, and Product.
2. Stating Priorities for the Multiple Criteria.
3. Delineating the objectives of teaching as they relate to C. I. P. P.
4. Initiating staff involvement throughout all developments.
5. Separating the Observation Process and Data Collected from the Evaluation.

6. Develop assessments of the teaching act as a function related to:

   a. Content of the learning

   b. Activities and materials

   c. The expressive and interactive behavior of teachers

   d. The taxonomy of objectives that pertain to or are the primary purpose of the teaching-learning situation

7. The use or application of the tenets and characteristics of effective evaluation processes.

An appropriate question is: How does all this relate to the everyday questions of selecting and evaluating teachers? Isn't it true that we are presently locked into a series of conditions which call for a continuance of the tools and data we are using? You know evaluation of teacher preservice training, experience, cognitive exams on acquired knowledge--or the district-adopted evaluation system which demands principal observation, written reports to document the teachers' characteristics and rating scales to summarize the judgments.

These questions lead to an array of more specific questions, such as: What are the most reliable and valid assessments (or ratings) of such things as teacher-student interactions, the effectiveness of particular materials or media, the results of skill-building lessons, the measurement of emotion, temperament and attitudes of teachers, the predictive validity of how much the teacher knows, can write or compute in relation to how effectively the classroom will be managed and the students will learn. Or the most desirable use of standardized tests of candidates' cognition and affective characteristics as predictors for probable success.

You can now sense that the rhetorical and repetitive questions are--selection for what assignment, to achieve what objectives, by the employment of what knowledges and skills and to achieve what product outcomes? Unless we begin a steady movement toward such specification, then we may be like the past.

To summarize, then, I believe we have and continue to recognize some of the traditional aversions to evaluation as a psychological reaction to being judged by being doubtful about what criteria, what sample of performance or what situation will be used by the tester, the rater or the observer.

Secondly, we have had a great number of measures, ratings and observational techniques which have largely been used to measure the teacher, measure the learner, or measure the process. But there has been a paucity of practice

which has attempted to involve the several parties: the principal--teacher--student in the relationships of their individual actions to accomplish a specific objective or outcome in learning--precise student performance outcomes.

Third, there has been a repetitive assumption that all teachers should be alike in single variable characteristics and that all should be achieving common product outcomes in any multiple-faceted job assignment at any grade, with any type of student, with a variety of instructional materials and perhaps in various physical and cultural surroundings. There seems to me to be great likelihood that differentiated assignments can better fit the skills, knowledges and personal attitudes of teachers and for each of these assignments there can be designated performance outcomes in terms of student learning and other products.

Fourth, some of the Teacher-Action-Development-Evaluation programs that are going on suggest that the long-range team effort of the principal-master teacher-teacher-aide--can through establishing specific learner objectives--designing a learning lesson and critically analyzing and revising that lesson in terms of the proof of the student accomplishment look objectively at the elements in teaching. What is required in diagnosing and prescribing next learnings? What is required in planning a lesson to achieve that learning? What is required in the teacher-pupil interaction? What is required in the analysis of the student response and learning to reteach and/or move on to the next element of learning? Each of these demand different knowledges and skills which can be specified!

Although it is not present in all schools, there is a substantial amount of attention being given to staffing which has a manager-coordinator, a developer of instructional materials--a teacher organizer of group activities and a teacher-tutor or aide or instructional assistant to work with individual

learners. You have perhaps been impressed by the reports of how effectively aides have carried out certain tutorial and individual student support activities.

Although I reject the notion that the private sector of industry can achieve better results than the professional educators in public education, I am also well aware that the era of "Performance Contracts" has intrigued the public into believing that now there can be more precise accountability. Our development of more precise systems of educational evaluation seem an imperative. Indeed, this must--to my way of thinking--become an important item in staff contractual relations, and it would appear essential that even in negotiations this element will have as much, if not more, attention than the number of working hours, class size, selection of materials, and salary increments. Such agreements must be between and among all levels or role responsibility positions rather than decided by one group--to be used on another group.